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20 April 1956

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JFK

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Director and Deputy Director

SUBJECT: Briefing of Congressman Scrivner

1. Congressman Errett P. Scrivner is a Republican, from Kansas City, Kansas. He has been a member of Congress for thirteen years. He is the ninth ranking Republican on the House Appropriations Committee, and is the second ranking Republican on the Defense Subcommittee.

2. As far as we know, Congressman Scrivner has an excellent security record and is not unfriendly to the Agency. I briefed him several weeks ago, at his request, on the degree to which the Russians had used German scientists to further their military program. During the course of our meeting, the Congressman displayed a keen interest in the degree to which the Russians possessed scientific and technical know-how, particularly in the guided missile field. He is somewhat skeptical regarding statements that they are as strong as we are in this field. He feels that certain members of Congress, whom he described as "headline seekers" are making too much of a fuss about our alleged failure to keep abreast of the Soviet Union in guided missile development, and that these people are motivated largely by domestic political considerations. He would like to think that the United States is keeping ahead of the Soviet Union in the guided missile field, but he is very confused as to exactly where we stand, and he feels that the Congress has not been given a very clear picture on the matter.

3. In the light of the foregoing, I would strongly recommend that we be prepared to discuss Russian progress in the scientific field, and in the development of guided missiles in our meeting with Congressman Scrivner, in addition to the budget data which we are planning to give him.

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